

## From the President

JEFFREY WRIGHT

ENJOY living in El Cerrito as a part of a community that is vibrant and is involved in so many endeavors. A few events immediately to mind are the July "party" that takes place annually at Cerrito Vista Park. The Martin Luther King, Jr., program at El Cerrito is also another highlight. Last year was the thirtieth anniversary event taking place in El Cerrito. In 2017 we had great participation. We celebrated the centennial of El Cerrito that featured a series of events throughout the year, starting off with a parade and a gala reception.

Engagement is a strong indicator of the vibrancy and strength of our community and our city has demonstrated that we are engaged and vibrant. On February 19th, I participated in a distinct and engaging event in our city. The first event was our Chamber of Commerce monthly luncheon. It had an excellent turnout and presentation by local attorney who updated us on some new laws that have come into effect.

One when I say the presentation was quite an eye opener. Among the topics, she shared with us some issues associated with traffic violations. They are in the stratosphere! You do, please do not park in a zone, not even for a minute, and yourself paying a fine in 2000.

Another event that I attended was a council meeting where the hot topics of presentation and discussion were protection options. I arrived at the 7 p.m. start time and the chambers were overflowing with people spilling all the way into the street.

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## Celebrating 15 Years on Stockton Ave.



Supervisor John Gioia congratulates Jenny K. along with Kevin O'Neal and Al Miller at a February 9th anniversary party marking 15 years doing business on El Cerrito's Stockton Avenue.

BY CHRIS TREADWAY

IN CELEBRATING 15 years on Stockton Avenue, the Jenny K. Gifts shop is also bucking a national trend by going from online startup to mom-and-pop, brick-and-mortar business. Their secret?

"She has the most friendly business in town," said a woman bringing her father to the Jenny K. gift shop ([www.jennyk.com](http://www.jennyk.com)) on a cold but sunny Friday in February.

Married entrepreneurs Jen Komaromi and Kevin O'Neal specialize in friendly and neighborly at their storefronts on Stockton Avenue, which include the gift shop, Well Grounded Tea & Coffee Bar ([www.well-grounded.com](http://www.well-grounded.com)), and their latest venture, a co-working space.

The gift shop opened on Valentine's Day in 2004 and just celebrated its 15th anniversary. The coffee shop began in January 2005. All three are in the same building, with other storefronts sandwiched in between.

"I can't believe it," Komaromi said looking back 15 years. "I don't know if I ever thought about it. We never thought of failure as an option. It just evolved. Time goes by very fast."

So fast that the couple's two children grew up in the coffee shop starting as babies. Jack, now 12, and Evie, almost 9, now know the routine.

"Both have been here since they were three weeks old," Komaromi said. "They know how to ring up on the cash register."

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